



## The challenge of health & environment: Profiling risks & strategic priorities for now & the future

---

**Author(s):** Narain JP  
**Year:** 2012  
**Journal:** The Indian Journal of Medical Research. 136 (2): 185-191

---

### Abstract:

A substantial burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases in the developing countries is attributable to environmental risk factors. WHO estimates that the environmental factors are responsible for an estimated 24 per cent of the global burden of disease in terms of healthy life years lost and 23 per cent of all deaths; children being the worst sufferers. Given that the environment is linked with most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), without proper attention to the environmental risk factors and their management, it will be difficult to achieve many MDGs by 2015. The impact of environmental degradation on health may continue well into the future and the situation in fact, is likely to get worse. In order to address this challenge, two facts are worth noting. First, that much of the environmental disease burden is attributable to a few critical risk factors which include unsafe water and sanitation, exposure to indoor smoke from cooking fuel, outdoor air pollution, exposure to chemicals such as arsenic, and climate change. Second, that environment and health aspects must become, as a matter of urgency, a national priority, both in terms of policy and resources allocation. To meet the challenge of health and environment now and in the future, the following strategic approaches must be considered which include conducting environmental and health impact assessments; strengthening national environmental health policy and infrastructure; fostering inter-sectoral co-ordination and partnerships; mobilizing public participation; and enhancing the leadership role of health in advocacy, stewardship and capacity building.

**Source:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3461729>

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Extreme Weather Event

**Extreme Weather Event:** Flooding

**Geographic Feature:** ☐

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

**Geographic Location:** ☐

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

**Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):** ☐

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

**Health Impact:** ☐

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Malnutrition/Undernutrition, Morbidity/Mortality, Respiratory Effect

**Infectious Disease:** Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Vectorborne Disease

**Foodborne/Waterborne Disease:** Cholera

**Vectorborne Disease:** Mosquito-borne Disease

**Mosquito-borne Disease:** Malaria

**Respiratory Effect:** Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

**Mitigation/Adaptation:** ☐

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

**Resource Type:** ☐

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

**Resilience:** ☐

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

**Timescale:** ☐



time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified